

Predator Island: Washington State Department of Social and Health Services Internship

Name: Sarah Thieken
Project Type: Internship
STEP Advisor: Dr. Zymroski
Major: Psychology



Project Description:

With my STEP fellowship, I completed an internship with the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services where I worked as a High Acuity/Clinical Intern at the Special Commitment Center (SCC) on McNeil Island. The SCC is a treatment center for sexually violent predators who have finished their prison sentence but are found to meet requirements for civil commitment. The High Acuity residents are residents who are developmentally and mentally delayed and have severe behavioral problems. During my internship I was able to work with residents on the island, work with other clinical staff, complete data analysis for clinical and legal matters, learned self-defense and P.E.R.T., along with many other interesting tasks.

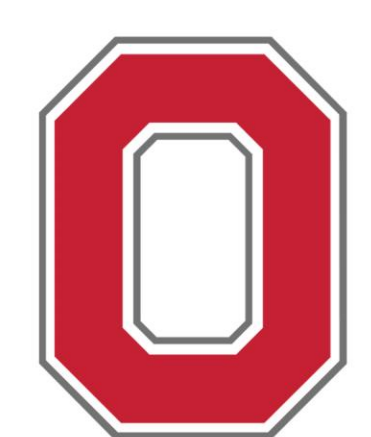
Motivation:

My main motivation behind choosing this internship is that I want to pursue a career in forensic psychology and work with people in prisons or facilities such as the SCC. This internship allowed me a one-of-a-kind experience that I would not be able to get anywhere else. I have always been interested in the criminally deviant and this internship was an opportunity to get experience working with them and a glance into my possible future.



Transformational Experience:

- Allowed me to work in a setting similar to what I am pursuing as a future career
- Able to work with Sexually Violent Predators in a clinical setting
- Solidified my future career goals
- Learned self-defense and P.E.R.T.
- Met so many amazing people
- Worked in multiple aspects – clinical, data analytical, legal, etc.
- Learned about civil commitment centers and the laws surrounding them



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Second-year Transformational
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